

**December 3, 1953**  
**Reception of Chinese Ambassador Zhang Wentian,  
30 November 1953, 12:00 p.m.**

**Citation:**

"Reception of Chinese Ambassador Zhang Wentian, 30 November 1953, 12:00 p.m.", December 3, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVPRF f. 0100, op. 46, 1953, p. 361, d. 9, l. 9-10. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Austin Jersild.  
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/116805>

**Summary:**

At the reception the appointment of the new USSR ambassador to China P.F. Yudin were welcomed by Zhang Wentian. The problem of food supply due to a difficult fall harvest were discussed, and a rationing system was proposed by V.M. Molotov.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

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3 December 1953

From the DIARY of  
V.M. MOLOTOV

Secret. Copy No. 17

RECEPTION OF PRC AMBASSADOR ZHANG WENTIAN,  
30 November 1953, 12:00 p.m.

Ge Baoquan and PRC embassy advisor N. Fedorenko were present.

ZHANG WENTIAN communicates that the PRC government agrees with the appointment of P.F. Yudin as USSR ambassador to the PRC and welcomes his arrival to China.

MOLOTOV expresses gratitude for this information.

ZHANG WENTIAN asks him to for information about the date of the arrival of c. Yudin to China.

MOLOTOV promises to communicate this information, as at present c. Yudin is located in Berlin, where he is addressing several matters, and within several days will return to Moscow in order to prepare for his trip to Beijing.

ZHANG WENTIAN communicates that a PRC trading delegation has been in Moscow for several days and has begun negotiations with the Ministry of Trade and that the negotiations have been intensive. In connection with the fact that difficulties have arisen in China with the fall harvest (rice, wheat, and so on) and the production of cooking oil, this year measures to supply cereals from China to the USSR are not able to be increased, and therefore it is best to maintain the level [of the deliveries] of last year. The PRC as well cannot increase the delivery of grain to the people's democratic countries of Europe, although they persistently request this of China.

In connection with the production difficulties in China (in the cities lines for rice and flour have appeared) the PRC government has decided to monopolize the trade of cereals and has forbidden private trade in grain. Further, it's clear, a rationing system for goods will be instituted.

MOLOTOV says that if production difficulties require the introduction in the PRC of a rationing system to normalize supply, then indeed it is necessary to take special care in the resolution of this problem. In this regard it would be advisable to draw on the rich experience in this area of the Soviet Union, where a rationing system has been instituted several times. It is necessary to consider that the introduction of a rationing system for goods should have the goal of the supply of not the entire population, but a specific, limited contingent. Here one must maintain not only the principle of the class approach, but the principle of differentiated supply in regard to separate strata of the working class, that is, restraint in supply must be exercised, above all, for the more or less important, leading categories of workers, who ensure the fulfillment of the plan for the main areas of industry. It is necessary also to differentiate supply for the different members of a family and so on. Regarding the rural population, they have never been guaranteed supply in the Soviet Union.

ZHANG WENTIAN expresses agreement with this point of view and emphasizes that in the given matter it is necessary for China to utilize the rich experience of the Soviet Union.

The conversation continued for ten minutes.

Recorded by N. Fedorenko.

CIRCULATED:

To comrades

Malenkov Vyshinskii

Molotov Gromyko

Voroshilov Zorin

Khrushchev Kuznetsov

Bulganin Pushkin

Kaganovich Podtserob

Mikoian Il'ichev

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